

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 H-01 INR-07 L-02 PM-03 PRS-01 SP-02

SS-15 EB-07 /048 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/ARP:EBIRD:LAB

APPROVED BY NEA:SSOBER

NEA/ARP:FMDICKMAN

S/S-O: APSHANKLE

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P 020024Z MAR 75

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA PRIORITY

INFO AMCONSUL DHAHRAN PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: USSAEC

SUBJECT: JOINT COMMISSION MEETING

1. FIRST MEETING OF JOINT US/SAUDI ECONOMIC COMMISSION
FEBRUARY 26-27 HELD IN ATMOSPHERE OF HEAVY MEDIA AND
CONGRESSIONAL INTEREST IN SAUDI PRACTICES UNDER ARAB
BOYCOTT, AND CHARGES THAT CORPS OF ENGINEERS, OPIC, AND
AMERICAN COMPANIES HAVE BEEN FOLLOWING DISCRIMINATORY
PRACTICES IN DEFERENCE TO SAUDI VISA POLICY. WIRELESS
FILE CARRIED FORMAL COMMUNIQUE AND THE OFFICIAL MINUTES
(WHICH WERE NOT RELEASED) ARE BEING POUCHED EMBASSY. UNDER
SECRETARY ROBINSON WAS RANKING DEPARTMENT REPRESENTATIVE
THROUGHOUT MEETING. FOLLOWING COMMENTS ON RESULTS OF
MEETINGS ARE MEANT TO SUPPLEMENT COMMUNIQUE.

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2. PUBLICITY GIVEN CORPS OF ENGINEERS HIRING AND ASSIGN-

MENT PRACTICES RESULTED IN CHANGE IN ORIGINAL JOINT COMMUNIQUE. REFERENCE TO CORPS ENTIRELY DELETED FROM FINAL COMMUNIQUE BY MUTUAL AGREEMENT, BUT COMMUNIQUE STILL SPECIFIES THAT USG WILL SEND A TEAM TO INVESTIGATE NEEDS OF PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

3. SECTION OF COMMUNIQUE ON JOINT BUSINESS COUNCIL OVERSTATES FINAL OUTCOME. IN PRIVATE MEETING WITH COMMERCE UNDER SECRETARY TABOR AND DEPTOFFS (AFTER CONCLUSION FORMAL COMMISSION MEETINGS), WE DESCRIBED TO SOLAIM POLITICAL AND LEGAL PROBLEMS WHICH MIGHT ARISE FROM FORMATION OF BUSINESS COUNCIL WITH VISIBLE USG INVOLVEMENT, PROBLEMS WHICH DERIVE FROM SAUDI SUPPORT OF ARAB BOYCOTT AND SAUDI VISA POLICY. SOLAIM RESPONDED WELL, SAYING HE APPRECIATED OUR FRANKNESS, AND INDICATING SAG WOULD BE WILLING TO PUT THE BUSINESS COUNCIL IDEA OUTLINED IN THE COMMUNIQUE ON ICE FOR TIME BEING TO AVOID RAISING THOSE PROBLEMS. HE SAID THAT IN ANY CASE SAUDIS THOUGHT THEY COULD HAVE EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH US BUSINESS THROUGH OTHER CHANNELS.

4. MINISTER HAD SERIES OF USEFUL EXCHANGES WITH MEMBERS OF BOTH EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE BRANCH. HE MET WITH SECRETARY AND DISCUSSED PRODUCER-CONSUMER DIALOGUE

BESIDES PRIVATE MEETINGS WITH SECRETARIES SIMON AND BUTZ, ABA AL-KHAIL MET WITH SEVERAL MEMBERS OF SENATE BANKING SUBCOMMITTEE HEADED BY ADLAI STEVENSON III AND BREAK-FASTED WITH WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN ULLMAN. AT LATTER MEETING, IDEA OF POSSIBLE SAUDI FUND AIMED AT DEVELOPING US ENERGY RESOURCES WAS DISCUSSED AND FOLLOW-UP EFFORT WILL BE MADE.

5. TECHNICAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT AND STAFFING OF US SIDE OF COMMISSION OFFICE IN RIYADH WAS THOROUGHLY DISCUSSED. ASSISTANT SECRETARY PARSKY IN PRESENCE OF EMBASSY AND STATE REPRESENTATIVES EMPHASIZED VERY POSITIVELY THE EMBASSY AND STATE ROLE IN POLICY SUPERVISION AND DIRECTION. TEAM BEING DISPATCHED IN NEXT FEW WEEKS TO DISCUSS WITH SAUDIS EXTENT OF STAFFING AND LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ADMINISTRATION OF TRUST FUND. TEAM WILL STOP IN JIDDA EN ROUTE TO RIYADH AND COORDINATE WITH AMBASSADOR AND EMBASSY THROUGHOUT VISIT.

6. ALL POSITION AND BACKGROUND PAPERS, AND MINUTES OF TECHNICAL SESSIONS HELD WITH SAUDIS (E.G., BRIEFING ON DOMESTIC SATELLITE) BEING POUCHED. INGERSOLL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: ECONOMIC COOPERATION, COMMITTEE MEETINGS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: johnsorg
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975STATE046689
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: EHBIRD:LAB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750073-0241
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750390/aaaaddsm.tel
Line Count: 114
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: johnsorg
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19 AUG 2003 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <04 DEC 2003 by johnsorg>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: JOINT COMMISSION MEETING
TAGS: ECON, US, SA, USSAEC
To: JIDDA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006